Inland Waterways project in Kerala

910. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kerala Government informed the Central Government that the condition laid down for giving sanction to Inland Waterways projects are quite impractical;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered the point raised by the State Government;

(c) whether Government have taken any decision on that basis; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) As advised by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, immediate steps are being taken for early completion of the public hearing. There after environmental clearance of the project would be considered by that Ministry.

Condition of National Highways

911. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleasd to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that pitiable condition of National Highways has been adversely affecting the production and growth of automobile industry in general and car industry in particular; and

(b) if so, what are the steps Government propose to improve upon the situation?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) The traffic on National Highways is increasing constantly, but the National Highways are being kept in traffic worthy conditions within available resources. The Government is also encouraging the development of National Highways on Build, Operate and Transfer basis with private sector funds.

Non-Application of Provident Fund Act to Seamen

912. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the seamen have been excluded from the Provident Fund Act of 1952 for providing them provident fund and gratuity benefits, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether there is a proposal before Government to amend the Provident Fund Act, 1952 to include in it the sea farers and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whetehr it is a fact that the National Union of Sea-farers of India has pioneered the concept of self-funding union and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Since seamen are not continuously and regularly engaged on board a ship or ships and work intermittently on voyage to voyage basis for each employment, seamen were excluded from the Provident Fund Act of 1952. However, later they were covered by Seamen's Provident Fund Act, 1966.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Govt. are not aware of such a concept developed by the Union.

Self-financing and Self-sustainable Ports

913. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that increase corporatisation of development and management of ports is the need of the hour;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal before Government to make the ports self-financing and self-sustainable on commercial principles; and

(c) if so, what economic benefits will it accrue?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) The 11 Major Ports in the country are already self-financing and self-sustaining as they are not provided with any

budgetary support from the Government. All development projects are financed by the ports from their internal resources.

(c) Does not arise.

करघों की मरम्मत तथा आधुनिकीकरण

914. **चौधरी हरमोहन सिंह यादव:**
श्री नागमणि:

क्या वस्त्र मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार बुनकरों के करघों की मरम्मत तथा आधुनिकीकरण के लिए कोई प्रयास कर रही है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो इसके कारण क्या हैं?

वस्त्र मंत्री (श्री आर॰ एल॰ जालप्पा): (क) जी, हां।

(ख) हथकरघा क्षेत्र का आधुनिकीकरण एक नियमित प्रक्रिया है। प्रोजेक्ट पैकेज योजना जो वर्ष 1991-92 में आरम्भ की गई थी, नये/आधुनिक करघों के प्रावधान के लिए आपेक्षित सहायता के साथ-साथ आधुनिकीकरण और अप्रचलित करघों की मरम्मत, प्रचलित करघों को वाणिज्यक/उन्नत करघों में बदलना, कलपुर्जों का प्रावधान तथा उत्पाद अनुकूलन/विकास पर विचार किया जाता है।

(ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

Carpet Technology Institute at Bhadohi

915. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Institute of Carpet Technology at Bhadohi in U.P. has not yet started functioning;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in negative, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The main reasons for delay in its functioning include: non-availability of land in time; shortage of funds; delay in execution of construction work of building by the Uttar Pradesh Rajkiya Nirman Nigam and ordering of a feasibility study for recasting of the project as per advise given by the Planning Commission.

(c) Does not arise.

Apparel Designing Institute in Uttar Pradesh

916. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to set up Apparel Designing Institute has been revived by the Uttar Pradesh Government;

(b) if so, the status thereof; and

(c) if not, found feasible, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) to (c) A number of requests have been received from different State Governments, including Uttar Pradesh, for the setting up of NIFT Centre in their States. Government of India in the Ministry of Textiles have therefore set up an Expert Group to evaluate the need and justification for additional centres of NIFT during the 9th Plan period.

Development of Handicrafts

917. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spend on the development of handicrafts during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) the details of the targets set for the development of handicrafts during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(c) the steps taken by Government for the speedy development of handicrafts in the country particularly in Punjab;

(d) whether any incentives are being given to the rural artisans to promote handicrafts in the country; if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R. L. JALAPPA): (a) The amount spent on the development of handicrafts during the Eighth Five Year Plan is around Rs. 192.75 crores.

(b) The financial target for 9th Five Year Plan has been set at Rs. 400.00 crores subject to the approval of Planning Commission.

(c) The steps taken for speedy development of handicrafts in the country including in the State of Punjab include: training; design development; marketing support; setting up of crafts development centres; supply of modern